To seek out and advocate for the poor and needy, especially families, for the Kingdom of God.

One Charism

One Mission

New Paths

New Ministries
Dear Family and Friends,

Amazing Grace! This is the only way to describe this past year. We completed the move to our new Motherhouse and saw the former Motherhouse taken down. With that move came both loss and abundance:

• Loss of ways we lived our lives for the past 50-plus years in the old building and gratitude for our beautiful new home and new ways of living and being in mission.

• Our greatest loss was the death of five of our Sisters who spent their lives in service and commitment to the mission entrusted to us.

• With hearts filled with gratitude we celebrated our Jubilarians and the diverse ways they serve the Church and our world.

With God’s grace we continue to collaborate in ministry to immigrants and refugees, the incarcerated, those with special needs, the sick and dying, and those who experience housing and food insufficiency. As our Sisters age, our ministries of prayer and advocacy take on new meaning.

Our hearts rejoice in God’s gracious care for us. This care comes through family, friends, ministry partners and you, our benefactors. Your steadfast support of us, both through your Gift of Prayer and donations, have allowed us to seek out, provide services, and advocate for the most vulnerable. May God abundantly bless you for your generosity.

With gratitude and prayer,

Sister Caritas Foster
Congregational President
Sister Marie Ann Brent

Sister Marie Ann Brent, SHF, died suddenly at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Holy Family in Fremont on November 22, 2017, at the age of 83. Sister Marie Ann served in day homes and religious education in parishes in southern California, the Bay Area and Texas until the early 1970s when she went to Alaska to help out in summer religious education programs. The rest is history! The Alaska tourism commission has a saying, “Once you come to Alaska, you never go all the way home.” This was certainly true of Sister Marie Ann. Sister Marie Ann served in Southeastern Alaska, in Sitka and in the smallest missions and villages in the scattered islands. Sister also served in the remote Aleutian Islands, far western Alaska, and most recently as pastoral administrator of the parish in Valdez. In addition to pastoral and liturgical activities, she was also deeply involved in emergency medical service and chaplaincies with first responders.

Sister Marjorie Wakelin

Sister Marjorie Wakelin, SHF, died peacefully at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Holy Family in Fremont after a long illness on September 27, 2017, at the age of 86. Sister Marjorie served in the field of religious education in various parishes in the Archdioceses of San Francisco and Los Angeles, and was Pastoral Associate at St. Timothy’s Parish in San Mateo from 1991-2002. She served as Executive Director for the Northern California branch of the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) from 1983-1988. Sister Marjorie was passionate about justice for the poor, a concern reflected in her work at ICCR as well as throughout her parish work and life in Community. As pastoral associate, she also worked with the dying, and wrote in a reflection on life, death and dying in 2006: “I have always loved color and music and dance. Because of this, I await the color, music and dance of the heavenly kingdom, where union with my spouse will be fully realized.”

Gift of Prayer

The Sisters of the Holy Family Gift of Prayer tributes offer a thoughtful and special way to honor a friend or relative. Use a Gift of Prayer card to remember the deceased or celebrate an anniversary, birthday, promotion, retirement or birth. Your contribution helps the Sisters continue their ministries to seek out and advocate for the poor and needy, especially families, for the Kingdom of God.

Upon receipt of your donation, an acknowledgement card will be sent to the family or person indicated. The amount is kept confidential. The name of the person in whose honor or memory the contribution is made will be entered in our Gift of Prayer register or in our Memorial Book near our altar. (See insert)

“He who has gone, so we but cherish his memory, abides with us, more potent, nay, more present than the living man.” – Antoine de Saint Éxupéry
**2018**

**Sister Marianne Smith**

Sister Marianne Smith, SHF, died peacefully at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Holy Family in Fremont on June 21, 2018, at the age of 94. After her initial formation, Sister Marianne began her ministry experience at Holy Family Day Home in San Francisco, where she worked in the nursery from 1946 to 1950. She then served as teacher and principal in religious education programs in parishes in the dioceses of Fresno, Los Angeles, San Jose and San Francisco. She was Diocesan Director of Religious Education [DRE] in San Francisco and Stockton, and then was called to be Superior of the Motherhouse in Fremont from 1973 to 1976. From there she went to Colma, where she served as DRE at Holy Angels Parish from 1976 to 1991. From there, Sister Marianne returned to her initial ministry experience, serving as social worker at Holy Family Day Home from 1991 until her retirement in 2015. What began as a temporary placement became the love of her life, and the love was mutual.

**Sister M. Jeanne Creager**

Sister M. Jeanne Creager, SHF, died peacefully at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Holy Family in Fremont on June 7, 2018, at the age of 97. Sister Jeanne served in catechetical ministry as principal and teacher in day homes and parishes in the dioceses of San Francisco, Los Angeles, Fresno, Oakland, San Jose and Monterey. In 1999 Sister Jeanne came to the Motherhouse in Fremont, where she remained in community ministry and volunteer ministry until her retirement and death. Sister enjoyed cooking, painting and sewing. Some of her artwork was exhibited as part of art projects conducted by On Lok Lifeways in Fremont.

**Sister Karen Stern**

Sister Karen Stern, SHF, died peacefully at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Holy Family in Fremont on February 18, 2018, at the age of 87. Sister Karen served in catechetical ministry and day homes in the Dioceses of Oakland, San Francisco and in Nevada until she was called by her Sisters to serve in Congregational leadership. She served as Councilor from 1979 to 1983, and was elected President of the Congregation in 1983, a position she held until 1991. After a sabbatical, Sister Karen went to Park City, Utah, in 1992, where she served as pastoral associate until 2002. She returned to California that year, and in 2004 moved to the Motherhouse in Fremont, where she was active in Pax Christi, the international Catholic peace movement, and also worked tirelessly as a volunteer at Washington Hospital in Fremont.
The Sisters of the Holy Family are creating New Traditions through a Ministry of Connecting carrying forward our ministries in new ways. Do you remember Sister John Marie’s Pantry? While our Sisters may not be organizing pantries at parishes anymore, we are supporting the expansion of a local Mobile Pantry in Fremont, California to reach more people in need.

Who needs a Mobile Pantry?
In spite of our recovering economy, Alameda County residents, including those in Fremont and surrounding cities, face “one of the most profound poverty issues of our generation” according to the recently published Hunger Study Report by Alameda County Community Food Bank.

Unfortunately, due to the high cost of living, too many people in our community are not getting enough nutritious food to eat. Seniors living on SSI face real poverty and housing insecurity – where rent can be more than their monthly allowance and they are faced with choosing between medicine, food and rent. Meanwhile, families and individuals today, more than ever, rely on several jobs just to make ends meet.

We know the Tri-City Volunteers [TCV] Mobile Pantry is successfully serving the housed and homeless, and individuals and families of all ages who are hungry in our area. Mobile food pantries are like farmers’ markets on wheels, delivering a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and baked goods to people in need.

Where does the TCV Mobile Pantry go?
The TCV Mobile Pantry brings food outside of regular hours of operation to partner site locations where there are people in need of food. These sites might be schools, churches, senior and community centers, or homeless encampments.

Because it is a Mobile Pantry it can travel and enter underserved areas to assist people who are unable to travel to find food. It will bring access to TCV services, while offering opportunities to select the food they need for themselves and their families.

How does a Mobile Pantry work?
Each distribution is held in a Farmers Market style allowing people to walk through and pick the foods that best fit their needs. Volunteers oversee distribution and assist people with questions or concerns.

Mobile Pantry Van

We believe everyone should have access to the nutritious foods they need to live a healthy, productive life!

We are committed to the Tri-City Volunteers [TCV] Mobile Pantry, which seeks out people who need food the most. We are enthusiastic about this because it is a direct reflection of our own mission “to seek out and advocate for the poor and needy, especially families.”

TCV needs another van to meet the growing needs of the Mobile Pantry and its recipients. The Sisters have committed $20,000 toward the $50,000 operating cost for the van – but that is just the beginning.

We invite you to join us to complete the difference toward this critical need. You can make it possible for TCV Mobile Pantry to offer food to the hungry in our community sooner.

Every contribution you make to the Sisters increases our contribution and will make our impact that much more significant.

We want to thank our friends who have already answered our call toward this effort.

Please send your donation today to the Sisters of the Holy Family, PO Box 3248, Fremont, CA 94539. Mark your donation to the TCV Mobile Pantry Van. You can also make your contribution by calling 510-624-4581, or securely online at https://bit.do/SHFDDonate.
75 years
Sister Geraldine Garbarino

As I celebrate 75 years as a Sister of the Holy Family, my gratitude goes to my family whose example inspired and supported me throughout my many years of religious education and pastoral care. I was inspired to join the Sisters of the Holy Family by my sister, Adrian, who had joined five years earlier. Now I take each day as it comes.

Of all my years in religious education, I so loved my 17 years at the Alameda Naval Air Station where I worked with many chaplains. I was Director of Religious Education, and we taught many children and adults. One highlight during this time was the commissioning of the ship, the U.S.S. Enterprise. Another highlight was the two glass windows that were dedicated, one to my parents and the other to the CCD class.

“It is only in the giving of oneself to others that we truly live.” – Ethel Percy Andrus.

70 years
Sister Dorothy Schmedinghoff

In 1991, having worked many years with Veena Roesler setting up the Best House for weddings, my ministry took me to the small, historical gold mining town of Nevada City, California and to the parish of St. Canice.

What a treat! This was the first time, after 50 years in our Community, where I would live, work, and socialize full-time in one parish. Shortly after my arrival, a new priest was installed as pastor — progressive, fun, open to the Spirit — Father James McKnight.

Since the religion program was fairly small, I could spend time in a variety of ministries: home visiting; training a choir and playing the organ for Mass; bringing Communion (many times with Father) to seniors who were unable to come to Mass, and offering Communion when Father was not available; and my favorite, Adult Bible Study.

I so enjoyed being there—I spent 10 years in this pleasant, enriching environment. Thank you to Father McKnight and to the St. Canice community.

70 years
Sister Lucille Hintze

In the 1980s, I lived and worked in St. Elizabeth’s Parish in Oakland; the people there were hardworking and generous. I loved helping the people in that community and the surrounding neighborhoods.

While I taught religious education to public school students, I truly appreciated my collaboration with the Mission San Jose Dominican Sisters who taught the elementary and secondary Catholic school students. We had a great partnership and helped each other in many ways.

I enjoyed living and working in this great parish, St. Elizabeth’s.
Ministry to Refugees
Sister Mary Lange

Sister Mary Lange is now working with a family from the Democratic Republic of the Congo [DRC]. A father, a mother and their six children spent 10 years in a refugee camp in Uganda before being approved to come to the United States. This family had to leave their home country due to the instability and violence. They are seeking to provide for their children in a new place which, in time, will become “home.” This means learning a new language and gaining greater fluency in English for the father who was a translator. Their children now have the opportunity to go to school and to live in a peaceful place.

Ministry of Prayer, Faith in Community
Sister Patricia Wittman

Sharing faith life with my Sisters is more than studying doctrine on a daily basis. It is listening to the Holy Spirit and sharing our faith in prayer and contemplation. We share our prayers every day.

I also bring prayer and communion to the On Lok-Peralta PACE Center once each month. For many, English is not their primary language but being Christian is something they do have in common. This past month our theme was Bread of Life, resulting directly from our recent Community’s evening of prayer and reflection.

Monthly Donations to Support Ministries

There are still Sisters changing lives of immigrants, families, the elderly and others through pastoral care and social work ministries. Participants in our monthly giving program understand the Sisters’ need for ongoing, consistent philanthropic support.

Your monthly gift will have a direct impact on our active ministry programs and provide a stable source of funding for the Sisters. It will allow us to continue important ministries for marginalized and low-income people and families in the following areas of focus:

• Housing and Homelessness: Such as establishing an Opportunity Fund with a local homeless and housing organization.

• Immigrant and Refugee: To continue assistance for immigrant and refugee families, as well as grants for legal aid groups who assist them.

• Early Childhood Education: For example, funding scholarships for at-risk and low-income youth.

• Hunger: By helping provide food through partnerships like TCV Mobile Pantry.

• Health and Well-being: By partnering with organizations like On Lok Lifeways PACE Services.

Do you want more information about monthly giving? Will you consider making a monthly contribution? Please call 510-624-4581.
Ministry to Sick and Homebound

Sister Mario Raffaelli
St. Lawrence O’Toole - St. Cyril Parish, Oakland Diocese, California

Pastoral Care brings Church to people. The Ministry to the Sick and Homebound depends on faith, compassion and prayerful presence. Together with six lay ministers, our ministry visits members of the community. Through our visits and companionship we offer compassion and encourage a sense of belonging and connection to the Body of Christ through the Eucharist. When Father Brandon Macadaeg arrived, we expanded our ministry to visit more people and added other services. We now also visit two assisted living homes each month and offer special monthly Masses.

At the Church, our special Mass each month anoints the sick and senior members of the congregation, and then we celebrate with a potluck reception afterwards. At this special Mass, our seniors are often disabled or frail so the priests go to the pews and offer Communion to each person. It makes it so much easier for the elders who are in poor health, or have a hard time walking. It has gotten to be so that seniors from other parishes come to our monthly worship!

It can be challenging to do this ministry right. Occasionally, we have a schedule change; which can be confusing and upsetting for people who have made it a tradition to come to these Masses. This ministry is pretty straightforward and we could always have more lay ministers to help. Maybe in your parish there is a similar ministry? If so, they can use your help too.

Ministry to Bereaved and Dying

Sister Sharon Mello, Director of Pastoral Care
St. Anne’s Catholic Church, Stockton Diocese, Lodi, California

I have worked for nearly seven years in Lodi with a team of 35 Lay Pastoral Care Ministers. Our parish has more than 3,500 families. We walk the path with the bereaved and also with terminal patients. We visit hospital patients where we might meet someone only once. We are following the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ Whole Person Care mandate offering ethical choices for end of life. It keeps me busy, but I am honored to be able to help people move toward heaven.

There was a man who was diagnosed with stage four cancer. At first, through chemotherapy, he improved. He was able to prepare himself spiritually and was able to give direction for how he wanted things to happen. He was able to choose the music and readings for his services. While his cancer prevented him from eating solid food, we soaked his Eucharist Host in water to soften it enough to put in his mouth. It was wonderful for him to be able to receive the Eucharist every day. At one point the doctors asked him what his pain level was, and offered to relieve it with medication. But he refused saying he wanted to enjoy his family for as long as possible and that he could handle the pain to do that. It was a beautiful experience; his whole family was involved and with him.

The hardest thing isn’t walking with people through their death and dying; it is knowing there are so many who are going through this alone because we don’t know who they are. We tell people we are here, but some are hesitant and distance themselves from everyone before they die.

I wish everyone could plan for their own end of life. This is a beautiful opportunity, not a sad one. Families would know what their loved ones wanted and decisions would come so much easier.
60 years
Sister Laetitia Rossi

Being a Sister is my love. I never thought of being anything else. A woman makes a commitment to religious life for God, not for the job. Everything else follows.

I have served in many ministries over the years, but for a few years religious education ministry brought me to parishes in Reno, Fallon and Gardnerville, Nevada. I spent time traveling to and from each community every week. Spending nights with parishioners in their homes, I got to know their families very well. Spending time with the parishioners brought me a great deal of joy, as did living in Community with several of our Sisters in Reno. It was simply the best! I will never forget those years.

60 years
Sister Elaine Marie Sanchez

“Life is an adventure; it’s not a package tour.” – Eckhart Tolle

This quote certainly describes my 60 years as a Sister of the Holy Family. All my years have blessed and challenged me in unexpected ways. Two early experiences impacted me so deeply that it influenced all other ministry experiences.

My first memorable experience was in Las Vegas, Nevada, working at Divine Providence Day Home with a predominantly African-American community at the time of the Civil Rights debate taking place in our country. It was this loving community that helped me to understand the injustices they had and were still living with. They invited me into their lives, and encouraged me to be a witness for the values we embrace as we marched together for Civil Rights during this important time.

Second was my ministry at Holy Family Day Home in the heart of the Mission District in San Francisco. At the time we were serving a large immigrant population, many from El Salvador. I was invited to participate in a delegation to San Salvador to accompany refugees back to their villages. This experience gave me a glimpse into the fear and danger they lived with daily, as well as the depth of their faith and the hope they placed in a loving God as they worked for social justice.

How could these experiences not help shape all my future ministries in Alaska, Nevada, and, of course, California? So the adventure continues; there is not enough space to share stories of the many amazing people who have been, and continue to be, a part of this fantastic journey.

continued on page 6
60 years
Sister M. Andrea Rangel

One of my favorite ministries was teaching people liturgical music for the Spanish Eucharist Celebrations. I loved working directly with people in places like San Antonio, Texas and Salt Lake City, Utah. I helped to start choirs to sing for the Spanish Masses. One of my favorite hymns is for Our Lady of Guadalupe, “Buenos Días, Paloma Blanca” (in English, “Fairest Dove, Most Lovely Maiden”) which I have sung since I was a little girl.

My favorite Masses are always when everyone in church sings, not just the choir. I tried to make the parish a welcoming place for all. No matter where people come from, music makes them comfortable and so they feel at home. It has always been a joy to help make that happen.

60 years
Sister M. Michaela O’Connor

Deciding which ministry has been my favorite is really difficult. I’ve enjoyed them all, and the ministry in which I was engaged at the moment was always my favorite.

The one I have enjoyed the longest is with the Kmhmu’ people of Southeast Asia, immigrants to this country, whom I am proud to call friends. Just a few years ago, Father Don MacKinnon and I realized that about 20 of our faithful Catholic Kmhmu’ adults had never received Confirmation; we organized some classes and a Retreat. Bishop John Cummins came to celebrate the Sacrament. Not only did he extend his hands in blessing, but he went to each candidate and placed his hands on each head for the petition to the Holy Spirit. At the sign of peace he shook each hand and had a pastoral word for every individual. It was as if the Holy Spirit had brought the Gleaners alive in our midst, showing the new Catholics that they were each esteemed in God’s eyes, honored in their simplicity and poverty; every one of them a precious grain in the Harvest of God.

Our charism of seeking out and advocating for the poor, especially poor families, is not for us alone. It is given as a gift, assisting us to build up the Holy Family of God. Sharing those ideals, and the work growing out of that conviction with like-minded laity and clergy, has always brought me great excitement and joy, a dose of humility, and proof of the tender care of God for us all.

All Souls' Day – November 2

During the entire month of November, we invite you to join us in prayer for family members and friends who have died. It is a time to be grateful and a time to remember how they enriched our lives. Would you share that with us?

Names of those you share with us will be remembered by our Sisters. You may simply email the names of your deceased loved ones to info@holyfamilysisters.org. The names will be placed near our altar during the month of November. Our Sisters will be joining you in prayer for those who have died.

As always, we also open our hearts and thoughts in prayer for those around the world who have suffered and lost loved ones through natural disaster, war and unrest, or personal tragedy.

“Never. We never lose our loved ones. They accompany us; they don’t disappear from our lives. We are merely in different rooms.” – Paulo Coelho, in “Aleph”
New Traditions . . .
A Ministry of Connecting
by Sister Ann Marie Gelles

In April the Sisters of the Holy Family sent out our Annual Spring Appeal letter. With the move to our new Motherhouse we could no longer host a Mother’s Day Brunch. In lieu of the Mother’s Day Brunch we decided to create a new tradition. We invited you to submit names of the special persons in your life and share the ways they were instrumental in shaping and molding you into the person you are today. You were also invited to send in prayer requests.

We had a tremendous response. We were so touched by the depth of your heartfelt sharing. Your cards were placed in a prayer basket and set before the altar. Sisters prayed for you, your mentors, and prayer intentions. You were also remembered at all the Masses from Mother’s Day through Father’s Day.

Our only regret was that we could not respond to each of you personally.

We thank you for entrusting your deeply personal stories with us. We give thanks and praise to God for the mothers, fathers, grandparents, teachers, coaches, mentors and others who have made such a difference in your lives, as well as your prayer requests. We would like to continue this way of connecting with you, our Family of Friends.

We will soon begin a new and more personal way of keeping in touch with you. If you would like a personal contact from one of the Sisters, simply use the enclosed envelope and include a note or send us the card and let us know your preferred way of communicating. Also, keep a lookout for a letter this autumn with a reply card you can use. As a new way of connecting begins, the Sisters of the Holy Family will, of course, continue to pray for our beloved Family of Friends.

Perpetual Remembrance

We remember our loved ones and honor their memory with great respect in the prayers of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

A Perpetual Remembrance assures continuing tribute in the Masses and ongoing daily prayers of all our Sisters. This is a beautiful expression of love to be given to a loved one or special person in your life: Living enrollments are commonly given for special occasions, such as a Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, graduation, birthdays or anniversaries. Enrollments are also thoughtful gifts in times of illness. For the deceased, enrollments are both a benefit for the departed soul, as well as a great comfort to those who have experienced the loss of a loved one.

A beautiful calligraphy-inscribed certificate with the name of the person being enrolled is sent for each contribution to the person you designate. (See insert)

Our Sisters would like to contact you directly!

Our Sisters are embracing new ways to minister. As you send us your prayer requests, memories of mentors, parents and others who have taught by their examples, discipline and sacrifices, we would like to thank you personally. Our Sisters want to give you a call and chat, not to ask for a donation and not to sell anything, but just to say thank you and talk about what is important to you. Whenever you send any correspondence, will you include your phone number or email, so one of our Sisters can contact you?

Going Green

The digital age is another way our Sisters continue to “go green.” Together we will be saving trees. If you have an email address, we would like to add you to our email list and send you our updates, newsletters and announcements.

Simply send an email to: linda.micciche@holyfamilysisters.org and please mention your full name in the body of the email. Emailing will mean you receive information in a timely manner.

We Respect Your Privacy

We assure you it is the policy of the Sisters to never sell, rent, gift or trade your personal information with any other organization or company. We will still send traditional mail to those of you who do not prefer email.
Autumn Mission Fund Campaign

We invite you to join our enduring mission: to seek out and advocate for the poor and needy, especially families, for the kingdom of God, by making a donation to the Sisters’ Mission Fund. You can make a one-time contribution, or establish a monthly donation, with the enclosed envelope. Gifts to the Mission Fund directly support ministries: funding scholarships for low income youth, providing care and support for victims of human trafficking, helping immigrant and homeless families gain ready access to food, ministering to people on death row.

Autumn Raffle – Watch Your Mail
In the past we held an auction to support our Mission Fund. This year we are concentrating our efforts on our raffle and would be honored if you chose to participate. Our goal is to raise $30,000 through our 2018 Autumn Raffle to help keep the Sisters of the Holy Family mission and vision alive!

The raffle gives you a chance to win high-dollar prizes!
1st Prize $3,000  2nd Prize $2,000  3rd Prize $1,000

We hope for this to be our most successful raffle, but we need your help to make it happen. Our Sisters may be doing ministry differently, but we are still seeking out and advocating for people who need it most!

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

New Memorial Plaque
For many years it has been the Sisters’ honor and privilege to be able to accept gifts from individuals to respect deceased family members with memorial plaques, or support the maintenance of our gardens. Now that The Gardens at Palmdale, Inc. has been established and the property has been reconfigured, the Sisters have gathered the names from all the small plaques, which were scattered throughout the property, and created a single Memorial. The Memorial is established near the old oak trees on the west side of the property. There is seating area for visitors’ use. While the Sisters can no longer erect new memorial plaques, we continue to serve you through prayer.